

REMARKS

Response to Restriction Requirement

In the September 9, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner imposed restriction requirement upon:

- Group I. Claims 1-38, directed to methods of disinfecting articles from contamination by prion proteins; and
- Group II. Claims 39-43, directed to compositions of proteolytic enzymes.

In response to such restriction requirement, Applicant has hereby amended Group II claims 39-43 and added new claims 44-83. Since the amended claims 39-43 and the new claims 44-83 are all directed to systems for disinfecting articles that are susceptible to contamination by infectious prion protein, such claims should be consolidated and designated as a single group for future examination and prosecution.

Applicant hereby elects the product claims 39-83 as amended/added herein. The non-elected process claims 1-38 are hereby withdrawn.

Since the withdrawn process claims 1-38 include all the limitations of the elected product claims 39-83 as amended/added herein, Applicant hereby manifests his intention to rejoin the withdrawn process claims 1-38 at a later time when the elected product claims 39-83 (as amended/added herein, and as may subsequently be amended) are determined to be allowable.

Such rejoinder was recommended by the Examiner in the September 9, 2003 Office Action, and such recommendation is truly appreciated by the Applicant.

Alternatively, Applicant hereby reserves the right to file divisional application(s) directed to the subject matter of those process claims 1-38 if rejoinder is not effected.

Election of Species

In the September 9, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner required the Applicant to elect a single species of enzymes as identified in claims 21 and 39 as originally filed.

Applicant hereby elects keratinase for subsequent examination and prosecution. Specifically, claims 1-25, 30-34, 39-66, 71-75, and 80-83 as amended/added are readable thereon.

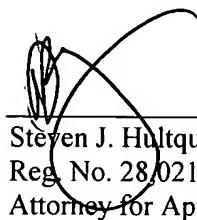
CONCLUSION

Claims 39-43 have been amended, and new claims 44-93 have been added herein. A check payable to the Commissioner for Patents in the amount of \$486.00 is enclosed herewith for payment of the official fees required for entry of the new claims 44-93 under 37 CFR 1.16(c) and (d).

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that are necessary for entry of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 08-3284 of Intellectual Property/Technology Law.

Please continue examination of the application on the basis of claims 1-83 now pending and constituting the claims of the application.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven J. Hultquist
Reg. No. 28,021
Attorney for Applicant

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY/
TECHNOLOGY LAW
P.O. Box 14329
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709
Phone: (919) 419-9350
Fax: (919) 419-9354
Attorney File No.: 4171-102 CIP